

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 08308 290936Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02  
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /105 W  
-----086159 290940Z /10

P R 290833Z JUN 78  
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1175  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8308

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EEWT, BTRA, VM, US, PEPR  
SUBJECT: VICE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER BRIEFS AMCHAM DELEGATION

REF: HONG KONG 8306

1. SUMMARY: IN A RATHER SMOOTH AND SEEMINGLY FORTHCOMING MANNER, VIETNAMESE SENIOR VICE MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH BRIEFED THE FIVE-MAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DELEGATION FROM HONG KONG (REFTEL). IN A FREE-WHEELING HOUR-LONG SESSION THACH TOUCHED ON US/SRV NORMALIZATION, THE SINO/VIETNAMESE DISPUTE, ASEAN AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN VIETNAM.

2. US/SRV NORMALIZATION. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS FROM THE AMERICAN GROUP, THACH STATED FRANKLY THAT WITHOUT ASSURANCES  
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OF AMERICAN AID, DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE. HE URGED THAT THE QUESTIONS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND MIA'S BE PUT ASIDE AND TRADE BEGIN. THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA WERE CITED AS EXAMPLES OF WHEN THE US ESTABLISHED TRADE PRIOR TO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

3. SINO/VIETNAMESE DISPUTE. THACH STATED THAT TWO

CHINESE SHIPS WERE ANCHORED IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS NOT FAR FROM VIETNAM AND ADDED THAT THEY WOULD GET "A SURPRISE" IF THEY ENTERED WITHOUT PERMISSION. HE OBSERVED THAT WHEN A THIEF IS OUTSIDE YOUR HOME YOU IGNORE HIM, BUT IF HE ENTERS, YOU SHOOT HIM. THE CHINESE ARE "VERY FOOLISH -- IN FACT, THEY ARE FOOLS\*" YOU CANNOT PREVENT FOOLS FROM DOING FOOLISH THINGS, HE LAMENTED. THACH CLOSED THE SUBJECT BY NOTING THAT VIETNAM WANTED TO SETTLE THE AFFAIR PEACEFULLY BUT CHINA DID NOT.

4. ASEAN. THACH CLAIMED THAT VIETNAM UNDERSTOOD THE ASEAN COUNTRIES BETTER NOW THAN BEFORE. HE EXPLAINED THAT VIETNAM DID NOT KNOW THE ASEAN GROUP'S REAL INTENTIONS BEFORE, BUT REALIZED NOW THAT THEY POSE NO DANGER TO THE SRV.

5. USSR. THACH BRUSHED ASIDE REPORTS OF RUSSIAN CONTROL IN VIETNAM AND SOVIET BASES IN CAM RAHN, DECLARING THAT VIETNAM HAD PAID TOO MUCH FOR INDEPENDENCE TO LOSE IT NOW.

6. COMMENT: THACH COMMENTS ON RELATIONS WITH THE US ARE THE SAME AS THOSE CONVEYED TO THE CWS GROUP IN MAY AND REPRESENT NOTHING NEW IN VIETNAMESE THINKING. HIS COMMENT ON CHINA ARE SOME OF THE SHRILLEST WE HAVE SEEN FROM A VIETNAMESE DIPLOMAT AND REFLECT THE INTENSITY OF VIETNAMESE EMOTIONS ON THE SUBJECT. THE CONCILIATORY  
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TONES ADDRESSED TO ASEAN APPEAR TO US TO BE A NATURAL RESULT OF VIETNAM'S IMPROVED ATTITUDE TOWARD NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES IN THE FACE OF PROBLEMS WITH CHINA.  
SHOESMITH

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** BRIEFING MATERIALS, VISITS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE  
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**Draft Date:** 29 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
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